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THE DAY DREAM

TENNYSON

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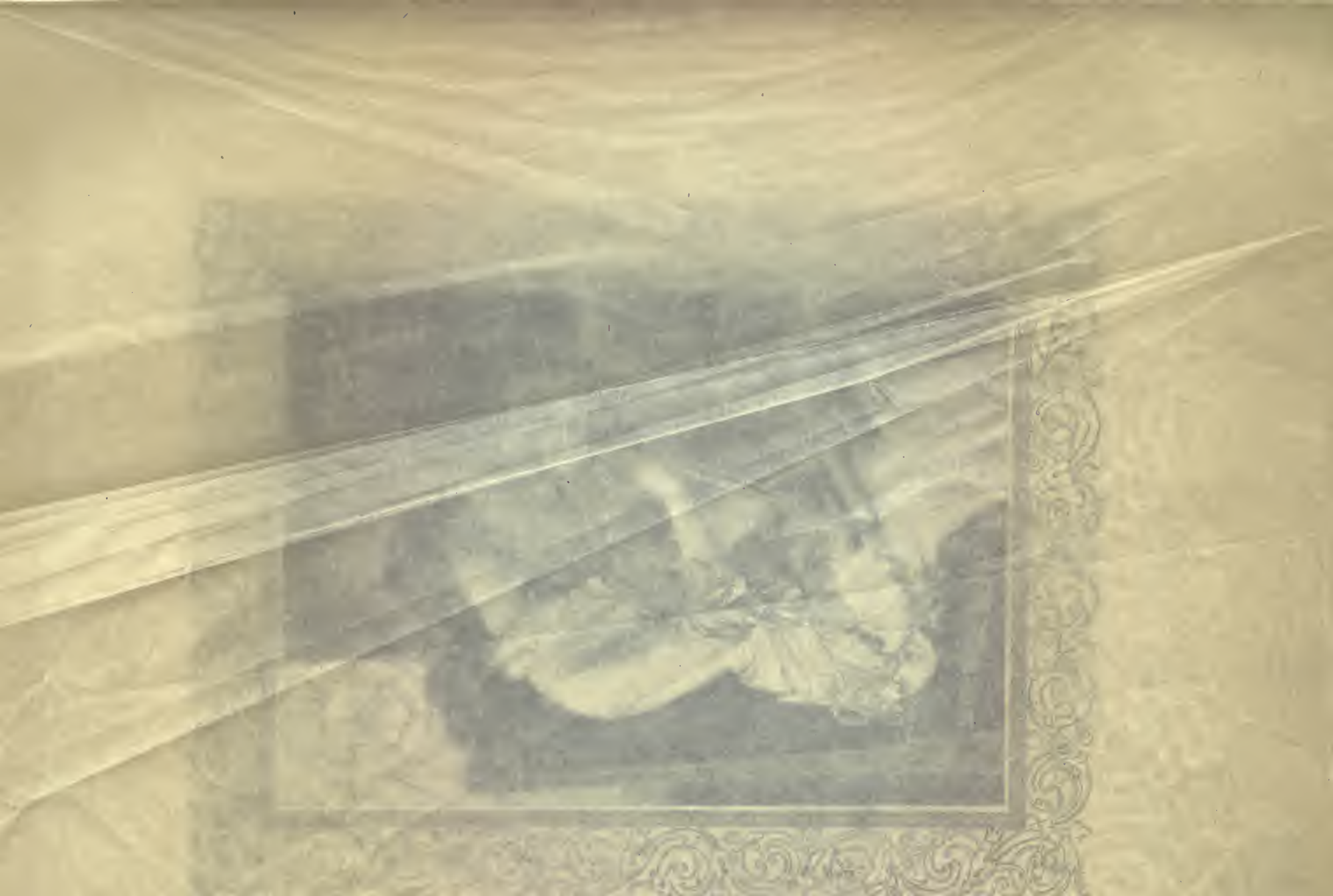
THE DAY-DREAM

DAY DREAM



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THE

DAY DREAM

BY

ALFRED TENNYSON

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1886

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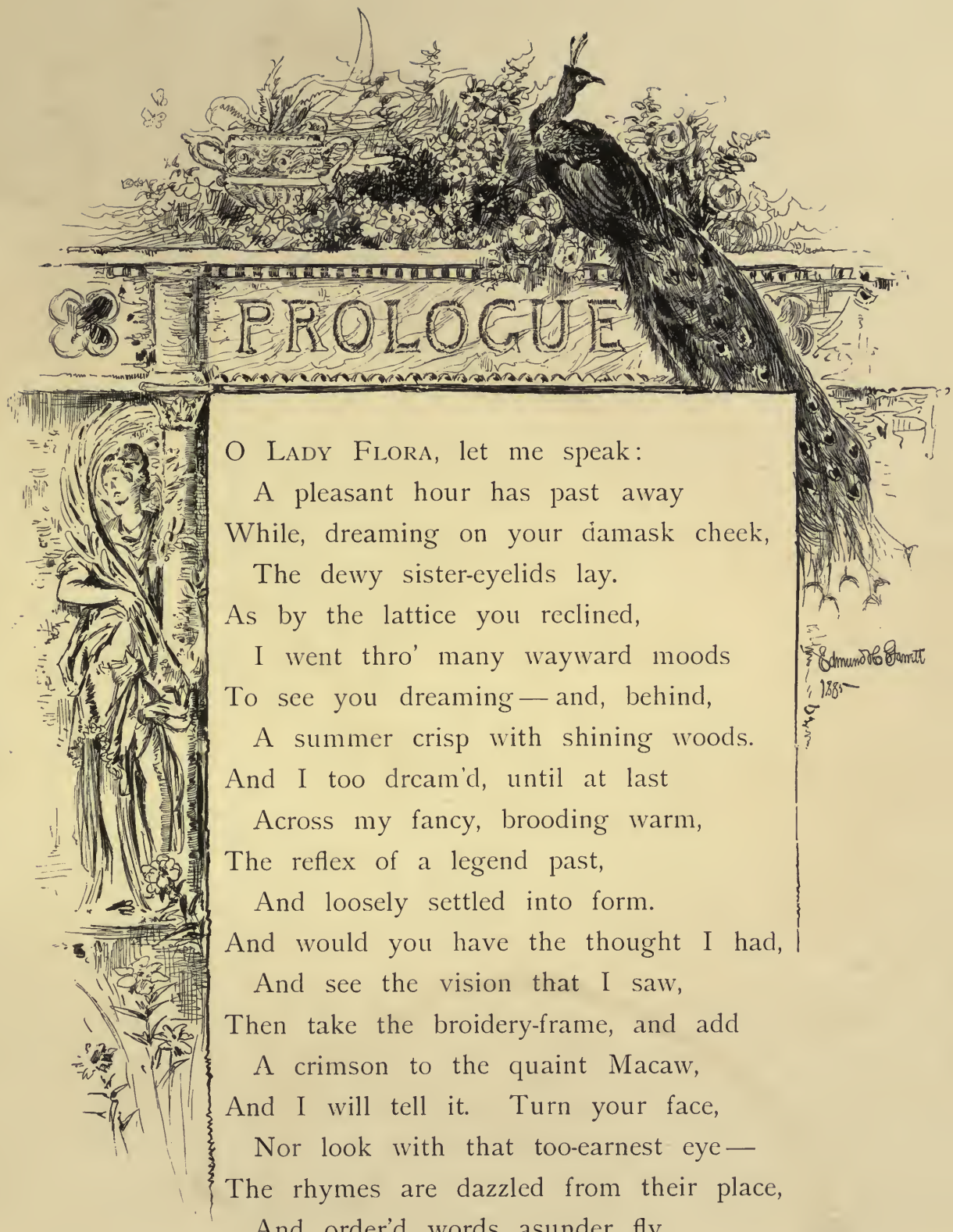
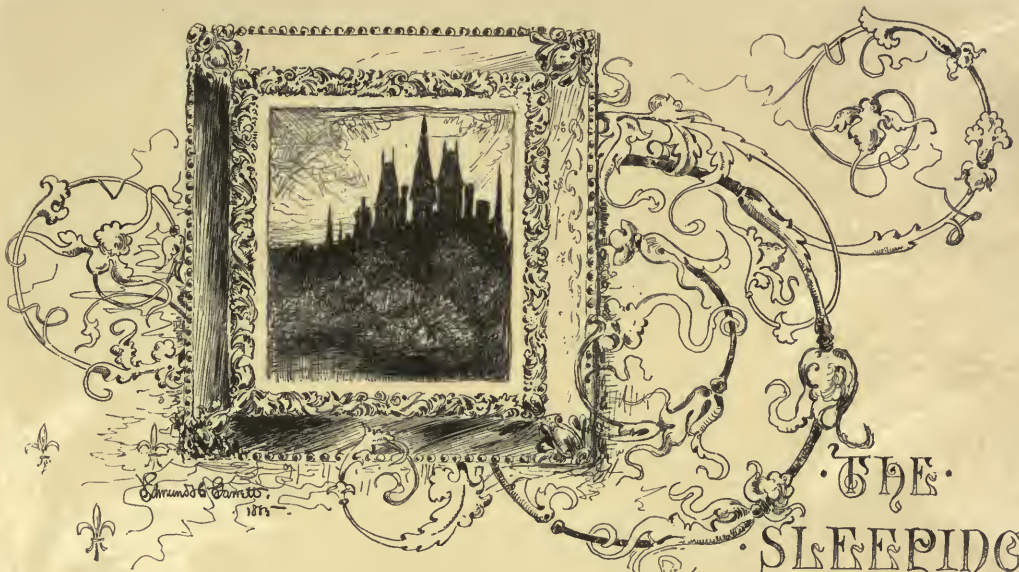


PROLOGUE

O Lady Flora, let me speak:
  A pleasant hour has past away
While, dreaming on your damask cheek,
  The dewy sister-eyelids lay.
As by the lattice you reclined,
  I went thro' many wayward moods
To see you dreaming — and, behind,
  A summer crisp with shining woods.
And I too dream'd, until at last
  Across my fancy, brooding warm,
The reflex of a legend past,
  And loosely settled into form.
And would you have the thought I had,
  And see the vision that I saw,
Then take the broidery-frame, and add
  A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
And I will tell it. Turn your face,
  Nor look with that too-earnest eye —
The rhymes are dazzled from their place,
  And order'd words asunder fly.



THE SLEEPING PALACE

I.

The varying year with blade and sheaf
  Clothes and reclothes the happy plains;
Here rests the sap within the leaf,
  Here stays the blood along the veins.
Faint shadows, vapors lightly curl'd,
  Faint murmurs from the meadows come,
Like hints and echoes of the world
  To spirits folded in the womb.

The varying year with blade and sheaf
Clothes and reclothes the happy plains:
Here rests the sap within the leaf,
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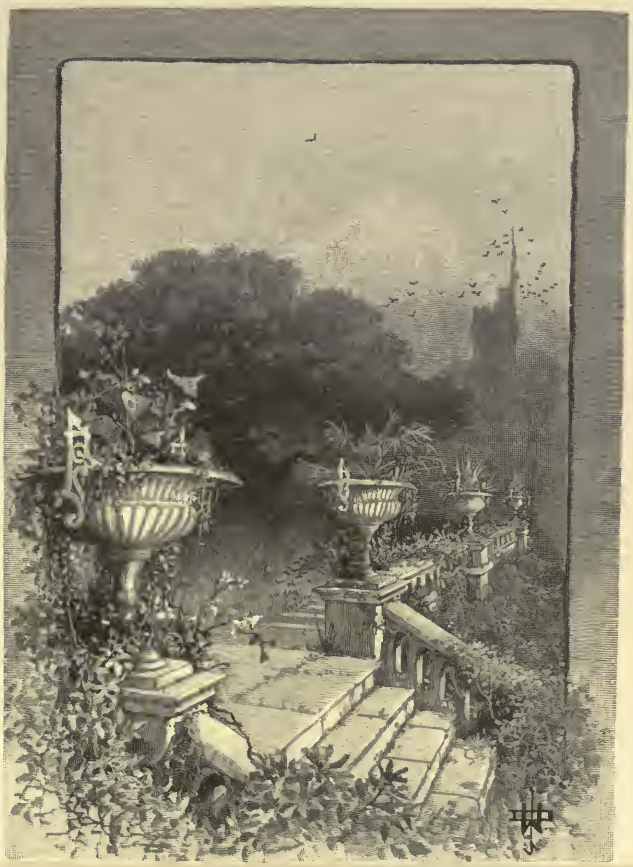
Faint shadows, vapors lightly curl'd,
Faint murmurs from the meadows come,
Like hints and echoes of the world
To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
On every slanting terrace-lawn.
The fountain to his place returns
Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
Here droops the banner on the tower,
On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
The peacock in his laurel bower,
The parrot in his gilded wires.



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The parrot in his gilded wires.

The peacock
In his laurel bower,
The parrot in his gilded
wires.

III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs:
  In these, in those the life is stay'd.
The mantles from the golden pegs
  Droop sleepily; no sound is made,
Not even of a gnat that sings.
  More like a picture seemeth all
Than those old portraits of old kings,
  That watch the sleepers from the wall.

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That watch the sleepers from the wall.

More like a picture
seemeth all

Than those old portraits
of old kings,
That watch the sleepers
from the wall.

IV.

Here sits the butler with a flask
  Between his knees, half-drain'd; and there
The wrinkled steward at his task,
  The maid-of-honor blooming fair;
The page has caught her hand in his:
  Her lips are sever'd as to speak:
His own are pouted to a kiss:
  The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

Here sits
the butler with
a flask
between his knees,
half-drain'd

and there
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And there

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The page has caught her hand in his:
Her lips are severed as to speak:
His own are pouted to a kiss:
The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
  The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
Make prisms in every carven glass,
  And beaker brimm'd with noble wine.
Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
  Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
His state the king reposing keeps.
  He must have been a jovial king.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
The beams, that through the oriel
shine,

Make prisms in every carven glass,
And beaker brimm'd with noble
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Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
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His state
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He
Must have been
A jovial
King.

VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
  At distance like a little wood;
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
  And grapes with bunches red as blood;
All creeping plants, a wall of green
  Close-matted, burr and brake and brier,
And glimpsing over these, just seen,
  High up, the topmost palace-spire.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
At distance like a little wood;
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
And grapes with bunches red as blood;
All creeping plants, a wall of green
Close-matted, bur and brake and brier,

And glimpsing over these, just seen,
High up, the topmost palace-spire.

And
Glimpsing over these,
Just seen,

High up,
The topmost
Palace-spire.

VII.

When will the hundred summers die,
  And thought and time be born again,
And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
  Bring truth that sways the soul of men?
Here all things in their place remain,
  As all were order'd, ages since.
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and Pain,
  And bring the fated fairy Prince.

Here all things
In their place remain,
As all were order'd,
Ages since.

Come, Care and Pleasure
Hope and Pain,
And bring
The fated fairy Prince.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

I.

Year after year unto her feet,
  She lying on her couch alone,
Across the purpled coverlet,
  The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
On either side her tranced form
  Forth streaming from a braid of pearl:
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
  And moves not on the rounded curl.

Year after year unto her feet,
She lying on her couch alone,
Across the purpled coverlet,
The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
On either side her tranced form.
Forth streaming from a braid of pearl:
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
And moves not on the rounded curl

II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
  Unto her limbs itself doth mould
Languidly ever; and, amid
  Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
Glows forth each softly-shadow'd arm
  With bracelets of the diamond bright:
Her constant beauty doth inform
  Stillness with love, and day with light.

The silk star broider'd coverlid
Unto her limbs itself doth mould
Languidly ever; and amid
Her full black ringlets downward roll'd
Glows forth each softly shadowed arm
With bracelets of the diamond bright:
Her constant beauty doth inform
Stillness with love, and day with light.

COPELAND

III.

She sleeps: her breathings are not heard
  In palace chambers far apart.
The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
  That lie upon her charmed heart.
She sleeps: on either hand upswells
  The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest:
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
  A perfect form in perfect rest.

She sleeps: on either hand upswells
The gold-fringed pillow lightly
prest:
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever
dwells
A perfect form in perfect rest.

The Arrival
Copeland

I.

All precious things, discover'd late,
To those that seek them issue forth;
For love in sequel works with fate,
And draws the veil from hidden worth.
He travels far from other skies —
His mantle glitters on the rocks —
A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,
And lighter-footed than the fox.

II.

The bodies and the bones of those
That strove in other days to pass,
Are wither'd in the thorny close,
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.
He gazes on the silent dead:
"They perish'd in their daring deeds."
This proverb flashes thro' his head,
"The many fail: the one succeeds."

III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he seeks:
  He breaks the hedge: he enters there:
The color flies into his cheeks:
  He trusts to light on something fair;
For all his life the charm did talk
  About his path, and hover near
With words of promise in his walk,
  And whisper'd voices at his ear.

He comes, scarce knowing what he seeks:
He breaks the hedge: he enters there:
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For all his life the charm did talk
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For all his life the charm did talk
About his path, and hover near
With words of promise in his walk,
And whisper'd voices at his ear.

IV.

More close and close his footsteps wind:
  The Magic Music in his heart
Beats quick and quicker, till he find
  The quiet chamber far apart.
His spirit flutters like a lark,
  He stoops — to kiss her — on his knee.
"Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
  How dark those hidden eyes must be!"

More close and close his footsteps wind;
The Magic Music in his heart
Beats quick and quicker,
Till he find the quiet chamber
Far apart.

He stoops — to kiss her — on his knee.
"Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
How dark those hidden eyes must be!"

He stoops —

To kiss her —

THE
REVIVAL

I.

A TOUCH, a kiss! the charm was snapt.
There rose a noise of striking clocks,
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
And barking dogs, and crowing cocks;
A fuller light illumined all,
A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,
The fire shot up, the martin flew,
The parrot scream'd, the peacock squall'd,
The maid and page renew'd their strife,
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and clackt,
And all the long-pent stream of life
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

The maid and page renew'd their strife,
The palace bang'd and buzz'd and clackt,
And all the long-pent stream of life
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

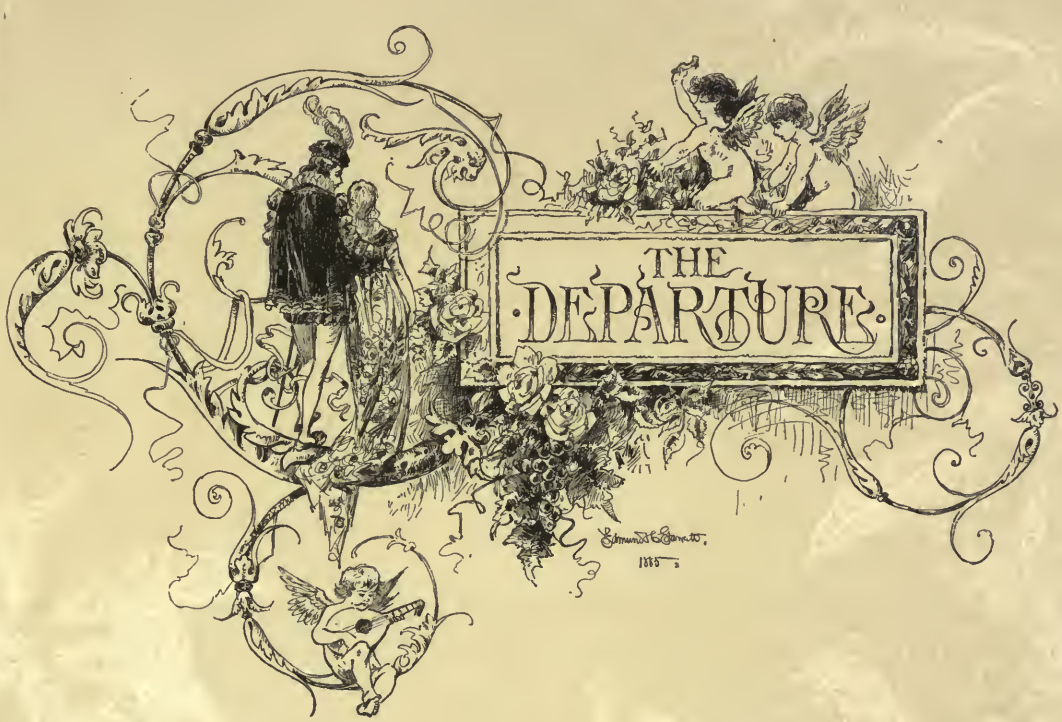
The maid and page renew'd their strife
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and clackt,

III.

And last with these the king awoke,
  And in his chair himself uprear'd,
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and
    spoke,
  "By holy rood, a royal beard!
How say you? we have slept, my lords.
  My beard has grown into my lap."
The baron swore, with many words,
  'Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

IV.

"Pardy," return'd the king, "but still
  My joints are somewhat stiff or so.
My lord, and shall we pass the bill
  I mention'd half an hour ago?"
The chancellor, sedate and vain,
  In courteous words return'd reply:
But dallied with his golden chain,
  And, smiling, put the question by.


THE
DEPARTURE

I.

And on her lover's arm she leant,
  And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
  In that new world which is the old:
Across the hills, and far away
  Beyond their utmost purple rim,
And deep into the dying day
  The happy princess follow'd him.

And on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
In that new world which is the old:

II.

"I'd sleep another hundred years,
O love, for such another kiss;"
"O wake for ever, love," she hears,
"O love, 'twas such as this and this."
And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
The twilight melted into morn.

III.

"O eyes long laid in happy sleep!"
"O happy sleep, that lightly fled!"
"O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep!"
"O love, thy kiss would wake the dead!"
And o'er them many a flowing range
Of vapor buoy'd the crescent-bark,
And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
The twilight died into the dark.

And o'er them
Many a flowing range
Of vapor
Buoy'd the crescent-bark,
And,
Rapt thro' many a ropy
Change,
The twilight
Died into the dark.

IV.

"A hundred summers! can it be?
And whither goest thou, tell me where?"
"O seek my father's court with me,
For there are greater wonders there."
And o'er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

"A hundred summers! can it be?
And whither goest thou, tell me where
"O seek my father's court with me,
For there are greater wonders there
And o'er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

MORAL

I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And if you find no moral there,
Go, look in any glass and say,
What moral is in being fair.
O, to what uses shall we put
The wild-weed flower that simply blows?
And is there any moral shut
Within the bosom of the rose?

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II.

But any man that walks the mead,
In bud, or blade, or bloom, may find,
According as his humors lead,
A meaning suited to his mind.
And liberal applications lie
In Art like Nature, dearest friend;
So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI.

I.

You shake your head. A random string
Your finer female sense offends.
Well — were it not a pleasant thing
To fall asleep with all one's friends;
To pass with all our social ties
To silence from the paths of men;
And every hundred years to rise
And learn the world, and sleep again;
To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
And wake on science grown to more,
On secrets of the brain, the stars,
As wild as aught of fairy lore;
And all that else the years will show,
The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
The vast Republics that may grow,
The Federations and the Powers;
Titanic forces taking birth
In divers seasons, divers climes?
For we are Ancients of the earth,
And in the morning of the times.

You shake
your head.
A random string
Your finer female sense
offends ...

II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
  Thro' sunny decads new and strange,
Or gay quinquenniads would we reap
  The flower and quintessence of change.

III.

Ah, yet would I — and would I might!
  So much your eyes my fancy take —
Be still the first to leap to light
  That I might kiss those eyes awake!
For, am I right, or am I wrong,
  To choose your own you did not care;
You'd have *my* moral from the song,
  And I will take my pleasure there:
And, am I right, or am I wrong,
  My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
To search a meaning for the song,
  Perforce will still revert to you;
Nor finds a closer truth than this
  All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
And evermore a costly kiss
  The prelude to some brighter world.

IV.

For since the time when Adam first
  Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
And every bird of Eden burst
  In carol, every bud to flower,
What eyes, like thine, have waken'd hopes?
  What lips, like thine, so sweetly join'd?
Where on the double rosebud droops
  The fulness of the pensive mind;
Which all too dearly self-involved,
  Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me;
A sleep by kisses undissolved,
  That lets thee neither hear nor see:
But break it. In the name of wife,
  And in the rights that name may give,
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
  And that for which I care to live.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And, if you find a meaning there,
O whisper to your glass, and say,
"What wonder, if he thinks me fair?"
What wonder I was all unwise,
To shape the song for your delight
Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise,
That float thro' Heaven, and cannot light?
Or old-world trains upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—
But take it—earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.

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Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson
The day dream

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